JAVA FREE PRESS

ESPRESSO ROOM CAFE

A STORY OF NEW BEGINNINGS

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FICTION

Published by Java Free Press
Indonesia

Archive Edition 2026

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Espresso Room Café

I am sitting in a café watching, people watching. Opposite me, there are a couple. He is a good-looking man of African origins and she is a beautiful girl of European background. They are sitting talking and they are or about to fall in love. He is talking with confidence and sincerity. She is listening to his every word, but her body language is giving her away. She has her arms close to her body in the same way a child snuggles into their favourite blanket. She likes him so much but is trying to hide it. Not doing a good job of it. She is totally smitten with him and her focus is on his every expression and word. I think they will shortly be in a relationship if they aren't already. They are getting ready to move on and she realises this and moves her arm across the table to touch his arm. He smiles and tries to hide his happiness but not very well. They both now realise that they are into each other and have become more relaxed. There is definitely some sort of amorous tension between them and you can see if you look, what is on both their minds. It's beautiful to watch. He has made the move and places his hands in the middle of the table meeting her halfway. All she has to do is touch his hand and the proverbial ice will be broken. She moves her hands close to his. I think she wants him to make the first move, but he doesn't read the signs and the moment passes. Is he the guy that wants to say you started it, is he playing games with her? She has moved her hands off the table and shows him that if

he wants to show her how he feels she can only reciprocate if he makes the first move. This two and throw goes on for a while and he sips his glass of water. She leans forward and puts her whole self-leaning on the table. The tension grows again. His hand is again in the middle of the table. They both want to be more, but neither is willing to make the first move making only subtle gestures to entice the other but without any results. Their game goes on for a while, He leans across the table and touches her arm. They are so close to making a move now but the lines of who will and who won't make it are blurred. It looks as if they are so keen to evolve their friendship into something else but are afraid that if they read each other wrong then it will be turned into a loss and rejection. Her body language is so obviously wanting this, but she just can't risk his rejection. I think he either needs to step up or back off. The cat and mouse game, they are in requires them to work out who the cat is and who the mouse is. They stand to walk away and he sees his opportunity slipping away. As they leave the table, he notices his hand by her side and he touches her ever so gently and she responds. Her heart beats faster and faster in anticipation of what their relationship has now just newly shifted to. She smiles such a smile that if you look you can see he overwhelmed happiness. He is also smiling, knowing that because she tightens her hand on his, he has started something that is welcomed. As they leave the table in the cafe opposite where I am sitting, I can tell that this is the end of their friendship as friends and the start of their relationship as friends still but also lovers.

About the author

William Dirk Mayberry is an Australian writer and independent digital publisher based in West Java, Indonesia. Writing across fiction, memoir, essays, educational works, self-help, and reflective nonfiction, his work explores memory, resilience, observation, and everyday human experience through a direct and personal style. His interest in storytelling began during his service in the Royal Australian Navy and later developed into a growing catalogue of independently published digital works released under the Java Free Press imprint. His publications include memoirs such as The Longest Way Home, children's stories from the Bag Chip Bird series, practical educational titles from the 101 Self Help collection, and speculative fiction projects including the Crononaught Collection. Influenced by writers such as Robert Louis Stevenson, his work combines realism, introspection, and accessible storytelling across a range of genres and formats.

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